THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The response has been quite encouraging.

(d) 379 candidates, who had passed, were found medically fit. These candidates have been included in the national merit list for recruitment into the IAF.

Defence Production Unit in Gujarat

806. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any representation has been received from Government of Gujarat for starting Defence production unit in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Task Force was set up to *inter-alia* examine the issue. The Task Force has recently submitted its report.

Manufacture of Sukhoi-MKI fighters by HAL

807. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that HAL has said that it will roll out the first locally built Sukhoi-MKI fighters in 2004;

(b) whether HAL is spending Rs. 32.5 billion to make this aircraft in addition to a capital investment of Rs. 32.5 billion on equipment and tooling; and

(c) if so, what are the details of this project?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) The first SU-30 MKI aircraft under license manufacture at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is planned to be delivered to Indian Air Force in 2004-2005.

(b) and (c) The Government has accorded sanction to the licensed manufacture of SU-30 MKI aircraft, its engines and accessories at HAL at a total cost of US $ 4809.3 million (Rs. 22122.78 crore at year 2000 price level and at 1 US $=Rs. 46).

Accidents of Aircrafts and Helicopters

†808. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Air Force's aircrafts including helicopters that met with accidents during the years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 till date;

(b) the loss of life and property in these accidents; and

(c) whether Government have taken adequate precautionary measures to prevent such types of accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Fifty four (54).

(b) The details of loss of lives and property are as follows :—

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Pilots killed	Civilians killed	Loss
2001-2002	09	03	200.41
2002-2003	07	23	5.258*
2003-2004	07	07	Not yet finalised

*Details have been finalised only for three aircraft.

(c) A continuous and multi-faceted effort is always afoot in Indian Air Force to prevent accidents. Measures to enhance the quality of training to improve the skill levels, ability to exercise sound judgement and situational awareness of pilots are being pursued.

Constant interaction with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) of concerned countries are also maintained to overcome the technical defects of aircraft.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.